Efficacy of auricular therapy for pain management: a systematic review and meta-analysis.

Yeh CH, Chiang YC, Hoffman SL, Liang Z, Klem ML, Tam WW, Chien LC, Suen LK.
Evid Based Complement Alternat Med. July 2014
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3110838/
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Auricular therapies may help decrease pain, according to a recent meta-analysis.

The meta-analysis, by Yeh et al. (2014) identified 22 studies in which auricular acupuncture, acupressure, or electroacupuncture were used to relieve acute or chronic pain. Thirteen trials were included in final meta-analysis. The study was published in the July 2014 issue of Evidence-Based Complimentary and Alternative Medicine.

Authors found that auricular acupressure most effectively relieved pain in comparison to sham and control groups, followed closely by auricular acupuncture. Electroacupuncture did not significantly relieve pain in comparison to sham and control groups. However, results in electroacupuncture trials may have been limited by a small sample size (n=19). Authors identify limitations to their meta-analysis, including a low number of trials (n=7) with sham comparisons.

The authors write, “Our findings suggest that auricular therapy can be used as an adjunct therapy for pain management and, therefore, reduce analgesic use to minimize potential adverse effects and tolerance.”

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